

**IN THE CLAIMS:**

Please amend the claims to read as follows:

1. (Original) A reinforcing bar binding machine comprising:
  - a binding wire feed mechanism for feeding out a binding wire so as to wind around a reinforcing bar;
  - a binding wire grasp mechanism for grasping and twisting the winding wire wound around the reinforcing bar;
  - a binding wire pull back mechanism for pulling back a loop of the binding wire wound around the reinforcing bar to be brought into close contact with the reinforcing bar and thereafter twisting the binding wire;
  - control means for reversely rotating a drive system of the binding wire feed mechanism by a predetermined rotational number in pulling back the binding wire; and
  - means for permitting to slip the drive system for restricting a pull back tension exerted to the binding wire to be equal to or smaller than a limit value of cutting the binding wire.
  
2. (Original) The reinforcing bar binding machine according to Claim 1, wherein the binding wire feed mechanism comprises:
  - a main drive sheave; and
  - a driven sheave brought into elastic contact with the main drive sheave, and

when a feed back tension exerted to the binding wire pinched between the pair of sheaves exceeds a certain value, the sheaves are idly rotated and the pull back tension exerted to the binding wire is restricted.

3. (Original) The reinforcing bar feeding machine according to Claim 1, wherein the binding wire feed mechanism comprises:

a main drive sheave; and

a driven sheave brought into elastic contact with the main drive sheave,

the drive system of the binding wire feed mechanism includes a torque limiter, and

when a pull back tension exerted to the binding wire pinched between the pair of grooves wheels exceeds a certain value, the main drive sheave and the driven sheave are stopped so as to restrict the pull back tension exerted to the binding wire.

4. (Original) The reinforcing bar binding machine according to Claim 3, wherein the torque limiter is a friction clutch or a ball clutch.

5. (New) A reinforcing bar binding machine comprising:

a drive sheave;

a driven sheave brought into elastic contact with the drive sheave; and

a motor that normally and reversely drives the drive sheave.

6. (New) The reinforcing bar binding machine according to Claim 5, further comprising:

a lever to which the driven sheave is attached; and

a spring attached to the lever, wherein the driven sheave is brought into elastic contact

with the drive sheave by a spring force of the spring.

7. (New) The reinforcing bar binding machine according to Claim 5, wherein the motor normally drives the drive sheave so as to feed a binding wire, and reversely drives the drive sheave so as to pull back the binding wire until reaching a predetermined rotational number.

8. (New) A reinforcing bar binding machine comprising:

a drive sheave;

a driven sheave in mesh with the drive sheave;

a motor that normally and reversely drives the drive sheave; and

a torque limiter disposed between the motor and the drive sheave.

9. (New) The reinforcing bar binding machine according to claim 8, wherein the torque limiter comprises one of a friction clutch and a ball clutch.

10. (New) The reinforcing bar binding machine according to claim 8, wherein the motor normally drives the drive sheave so as to feed a binding wire, and reversely drives the drive sheave so as to pull back the binding wire until reaching a predetermined rotational number.